

Title of the Invention

ESD Protection Configuration and Method for Light Emitting Diodes

Cross-References to Related Applications

Not Applicable

Statement Regarding Federally Sponsored Research or Development

Not Applicable

Description

Field of Invention

[0001] This invention relates to an electrostatic discharge (ESD) protection configuration and method for light emitting diodes (LED), particularly to one intended for preventing the LED from burning so as to effectively extend the lifespan of LED by subjecting the LED to engage a parallel connection with an RC circuit or a first and a second ESD protection configuration for absorbing and removing spikes induced upon human contact with the LED.

Background

[0002] The flourishing developments of electronic industry allow increasing utilization of LED to manufacture alarming, animation or advertisement products, such as, traffic signals with animation effects and large-scale advertisement billboards composed of LED. The LED is featured with the advantages of enhanced brightness, extended lifespan and feasibility for manufacturing large-scale billboards such that they are widely implemented in various industries.

[0003] In view of the current trend of development, it is expected that the brightness of the next-generation LED will be significantly improved

to serve as a highly efficient light source. In particular, power LED chips are featured with an overall dimension ten times greater than that of a conventional chip to allow extensive applications such that the power LED chips will be one of the prospective components. Power LED chips are commonly mounted onto a surmount substrate by adopting flip-chip structure to enhance illumination efficiency and thermal conductivity. Human contact is sometimes inevitable in the process of mounting the LED to a module thereby resulting in ESD that would damage the LED. In particular, in view of the currently available technology in material sciences, the new-generation high speed semiconductors, such as Groups III-V nitride semiconductors containing InGaN, consisting of an increasing dimension are accompanied by high defect concentration. ESD has thus become a major problem while employing such semiconductors in high temperature electronic components.

[0004] As disclosed in US Patent No. 5,914,501, a conventional approach for resolving the ESD problem is to subject an LED to engage a parallel connection with a set of back-to-back Zener diodes for modulating voltages entering the LED through the opposing terminals. A similar approach is to mount the Zener diodes in a silicon surmount substrate. However, unexpected spikes may still burn the LED due to the delayed response time and the parasitic inductance of the Zener diodes.

Summary of Invention

[0005] To resolve the shortcomings of the conventional art, the objective of this invention is to provide an ESD protection configuration and method for LED, that prevents the LED from burning and effectively extends the lifespan of LED by subjecting the LED to engage a parallel connection with an RC circuit for absorbing and removing spikes induced upon human contact with the LED.

[0006] To achieve the above objective, this invention discloses an ESD protection configuration and method for LED: comprising: an LED having a p-n junction, a resistor having a first end connected to an n-node of the LED, a capacitor having a first end connected to a second end of

the resistor and a second end connected to a p-node of the LED, whereby the RC circuit that is in a parallel connection with the LED serves as an ESD protection configuration that prevents the LED from burning and effectively extends the lifespan of LED.

[0007] To achieve the above objective, this invention discloses an alternative ESD protection configuration for LED, comprising: an LED having a p-n junction and connected to a circuit substrate, the circuit substrate having therein two p-type substrates and one n-type substrate; a first ESD protection configuration built-in the circuit substrate and including a first capacitor, a first resistor and a first diode that are connected in series and then engage a parallel connection with the LED, wherein the first diode has a p-node connected to an n-node of the LED; a second ESD protection configuration built-in the circuit substrate and including a second capacitor, a second resistor and a second diode that are connected in series and then engage a parallel connection with the LED and first ESD protection configuration, wherein the second diode has a p-node connected to the p-node of the LED.

[0008] These and other modifications and advantages will become even more apparent from the following detained description of a preferred embodiment of the invention and from the drawings in which:

Brief Description of the Drawings

[0009] Fig. 1 is a circuit diagram showing an LED engaging a parallel connection with an RC circuit according to this invention.

[0010] Fig. 2 is a schematic drawing illustrating the laminar structure of an LED in a parallel connection with an RC circuit according to a first embodiment of this invention.

[0011] Fig. 3 is a schematic drawing illustrating the laminar structure of an LED in a parallel connection with an RC circuit according to a second embodiment of this invention.

[0012] Fig. 4 is a circuit diagram showing an LED engaging a

parallel connection with components of a first and a second ESD protection configuration according to this invention.

[0013] Fig. 5 is a schematic drawing illustrating the laminar structure of an LED in a parallel connection with a first and a second ESD protection configuration according to this invention.

Detailed Description of the Invention (Preferred Embodiments)

[0014] The LED referred in this invention covers conventional LED and other illuminating LED, such as Laser diodes. The details of this invention are now explained by referring to the accompanying drawings.

[0015] [First embodiment]

[0016] Fig. 1 is a circuit diagram showing an LED engaging a parallel connection with an RC circuit according to this invention, wherein a resistor 11 and a capacitor 12 in a series connection engages a parallel connection with an LED 10. The LED 10 is a high speed semiconductor, such as Groups III-V nitride semiconductors containing InGaN, which would easily induce ESD upon human contact thereby causing damages. The parallel connection of the LED with the circuit consisting of the resistor 11 and capacitor 12 connected in series guards the LED against damages. The laminar structure of the LED is illustrated in Figs. 2 and 3 in details.

[0017] Fig. 2 is a schematic drawing illustrating the laminar structure of the LED in a parallel connection with the RC circuit according to an embodiment of this invention, wherein a resistor 11a and a capacitor 12a are situated outside a circuit substrate 13 and connected to a p-node 101 and an n-node 102 of the LED 10 via the circuit substrate 13 to construct a structure with an RC circuit externally connected to the LED.

[0018] Fig. 3 is a schematic drawing illustrating the laminar structure of the LED in a parallel connection with the RC circuit according to a second embodiment of this invention, wherein a resistor 11b, a first capacitor 12b and a second capacitor 12c are situated inside a circuit

substrate 13. The resistor 11b is disposed between the first capacitor 12b and the second capacitor 12c. An ideal resistance for the resistor 11b is 1K Ω . The two capacitors are made of a material having a high dielectric constant greater than 3.9, such as SiN_x, SiO₂, TiO₂, TiN and BaTiO₃, or their series material, and connected to an LED 10 via a p-node and an n-node of the circuit substrate 13. To ensure that a precise and useful capacitance may be reached, the first capacitor 12b and second capacitor 12c connected in series are treated to have an equivalent capacitance represented by the following formula:

[0019] $1/C=1/C_1+1/C_2$.

[0020] A metal conductive layer 14 and an insulator 15 are disposed between the p-n junction of the LED 10 and the circuit substrate 13 to ensure normal operation of the projection configuration connected to the LED 10 without any open or short circuits.

[0021] The structures disclosed in Figs. 1, 2 and 3 may prevent accumulation of ESC to the LED 10 upon human contact. However, enhanced structures are found and disclosed in Figs. 4 and 5 according to this invention.

[0022] [Second embodiment]

[0023] Figs. 4 and 5, respectively, illustrate a circuit diagram and a schematic drawing illustrating the laminar structure of an LED engaging a parallel connection with components of a first and a second ESD protection configuration according to this invention, comprising: an LED 20 having a junction formed by a p-node 201 and an n-node 202 and connected to a circuit substrate 23, the circuit substrate 23 having therein two p-type substrates 231 and one n-type substrate 232; a first ESD protection configuration 21 built-in the circuit substrate 23; and a second ESD protection configuration 22 built-in the circuit substrate 23.

[0024] The first ESD protection configuration 21 includes a first resistor 211, a third capacitor 212, and a first diode 213 that are connected in series and then engage a parallel connection with the LED

20. The first diode 213 has a p-node connected to the n-node 202 of the LED 20. The third capacitor 213 consists of a fifth capacitor 212a and a sixth capacitor 212b connected in series. An equivalent capacitance of the third capacitor 212 may be represented by the formula,

$$[0025] \quad 1/C_{212}=1/C_{212a}+1/C_{212b};$$

[0026] The second ESD protection configuration 22 includes a second resistor 221, a fourth capacitor 222 and a second diode 223 that are connected in series and then engage a parallel connection with the LED 20 and the first ESD protection configuration 21. The second diode 223 has a p-node connected to the p-node 201 of the LED 20. The fourth capacitor 222 consists of a seventh capacitor 222a and an eighth capacitor 222b connected in series. An equivalent capacitance of the fourth capacitor 222 may be represented by the formula,

$$[0027] \quad 1/C_{222}=1/C_{222a}+1/C_{222b}.$$

[0028] In the above construction, the third capacitance 212 is greater than the fourth capacitance 222, where both capacitance ranges between 100pF and 100nF. Such an arrangement of capacitance prevents from inducing ESD spikes of a larger magnitude upon forward bias of the LED 20, while the fourth capacitor 22 with a smaller capacitance serves to absorb ESD spikes of a smaller magnitude. On the contrary, the third capacitor 212 with a larger capacitance serves to absorb ESD spikes of a larger magnitude induced upon backward bias of the LED 20.

[0029] Accordingly, the first resistor 211 and second resistor 221 are made of a material having a low dielectric constant, while the third capacitor 212 and the fourth capacitor 222 are made of a material having a high dielectric constant. The first diode 213 and the second diode 223 are constructed the two p-type substrates 231 and the n-type substrate 232 in the circuit substrate 23.

[0030] The first ESD protection configuration 21 and the ESD protection configuration 22 provided by the structures illustrated in Figs. 4 and 5 serve as a two-way ESD protection configuration to effectively

eliminate the damages caused by ESD carried by human bodies. Meanwhile, the simplified structures disclosed in Figs. 1 and 3 may also serve to achieve equivalent objectives at a lower cost.

[0031] This invention is related to a novel creation that makes a breakthrough in the art. Aforementioned explanations, however, are directed to the description of preferred embodiments according to this invention. Since this invention is not limited to the specific details described in connection with the preferred embodiments, changes and implementations to certain features of the preferred embodiments without altering the overall basic function of the invention are contemplated within the scope of the appended claims.